

Issues and Conclusions

Land Acquisition

- 3.1 The NLA's main submission states that:
- "A preferred site for the proposed facility has been identified in Hume (Block 7, Section 1, Hume), but is not yet purchased."¹
- 3.2 The NLA anticipates, however, that the site will be acquired through a direct sale of land process and has applied to the ACT's Land Development Agency for the direct sale of the lease on the land conditional upon the Public Works Committee's approval of the works proposal.²
- 3.3 In their submission, the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) confirmed that the direct sale of the site will require the support of the ACT's Land Development Agency before a Development Application for the proposed facility can be accepted.³
- 3.4 At the public hearing, the Committee inquired into the status of the NLA's application for the direct sale of the site and whether there was any risk that the Library will not be able to purchase its preferred site.⁴
- 3.5 The NLA replied that while it had not yet been formally advised on the status of its application, there was

1 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 11

2 *ib id*, paragraphs 62 - 63

3 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No. 7

4 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 3

“...no evidence to suggest that there is any objection to it at this point...”⁵

- 3.6 Later, in a letter to the Committee, the NLA confirmed that the ACT Government had agreed to the sale of Block 7 Section 1 Hume to the Library.

Site Access

- 3.7 A new road will provide access to the proposed development site and will be constructed in conjunction with the new storage facility.⁶ At the hearing, the Committee wished to learn whether construction of the road might impede the designated site access.⁷
- 3.8 The NLA told the Committee that Tralee Street (an existing road that runs along the side of the block) could serve as an alternative access road if required.⁸
- 3.9 The Committee asked the NCA to indicate what approvals were required should the library need an alternative site access during the construction of the new road. The NCA informed the Committee that Roads ACT (which is part of the ACT Department of Urban Services) is the regulatory body responsible for deciding whether or not to permit temporary access from a major thoroughfare.⁹

Future Expansion

- 3.10 It is anticipated that the proposed storage facility will become operational in February 2006.¹⁰ Given the NLA’s indication that further storage will be required within only seven years of the completion of this project,¹¹ the Committee asked the Library to comment on whether the current facility is the most cost-effective solution to its storage needs in the long-term.¹²

5 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 3 – 4

6 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, A

7 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 7

8 ib id, page 8

9 ib id, page 17

10 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, Executive Summary

11 ib id, paragraph 32

12 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 4

- 3.11 The NLA told the Committee that there is some capacity to provide further storage of material at the existing facility in Parkes. The proposal currently before the Committee seeks to address the library's immediate storage requirements. The NLA said that it is also considering its longer term storage needs, in consultation with other agencies:

“We are working on a second stage of a portfolio storage plan to look at all those longer term requirements. I would expect that as part of that process we may look at larger facilities and greater sharing of facilities.”¹³

Site Selection

- 3.12 The NLA submission outlined the eight storage accommodation solutions which it had considered.¹⁴ The submission describes Option 3, the development and ownership of a new storage facility by the library, as the preferred option. At the hearing, the Committee asked the Library to elaborate on why the Hume site was the best choice.¹⁵

Preferred Site

- 3.13 The NLA explained that there are already repositories in Hume and for reasons of efficiency of retrieval it is advantageous to locate the new storage facility there. The library informed the Committee that it had also considered other sites within the ACT, in Fyshwick and Mitchell. However, land costs were higher in Fyshwick and the Mitchell site would be less accessible.¹⁶

Other Options

- 3.14 Further to earlier comments made in respect to the capacity for additional storage at the Parkes site, the Committee wanted to know if the library could develop underground storage at the current Parkes site. The NLA informed the Committee that the high costs of this option precluded its consideration.¹⁷

13 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, pages 4 – 5

14 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraphs 42 - 47

15 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 5

16 *ib id*, pages 5 - 6

17 *ib id*, page 6

Compliance with the Development Control Plan

- 3.15 Under the National Capital Plan, the National Capital Authority (NCA) is responsible for the planning and management of 'Designated Areas', which are areas exhibiting special characteristics of the National Capital. The Plan also sets out 'Special Requirements' for the development of non- 'Designated' areas, if those requirements are in the interests of the National Capital.¹⁸
- 3.16 The proposed storage facility is situated on ACT land outside the 'Designated Areas' stipulated in the National Capital Plan. Such sites under the National Capital Plan are required to prepare a Development Control Plan (DCP) for approval by the NCA, and are subject to assessment and approval by the ACT Government. An assessment must ensure that any proposed land use is not inconsistent with the provisions of the DCP.¹⁹
- 3.17 According to the NCA submission, the "Concept Design Drawings" appended to the NLA's main submission show three features which are inconsistent with the DCP, namely:
- the proposed setback, which is less than the required ten metres;
 - with the addition of the proposed future extensions (Stage 2 and 3), the building will cover more than the stipulated 50 per cent of the site; and
 - the gable end of the building must face the street.²⁰

Proposed Setback

- 3.18 At the public hearing, the NLA tabled an amended design plan for the proposed development, further to that provided in its original submission.²¹ The new version shows a reconfiguration of the building on the site to meet the NCA's requirement for a minimum setback along the Monaro Highway of 10 metres.
- 3.19 The Committee questioned the NCA on whether it had seen the revised design. The NCA replied that it had been advised of the change and had no further issues with that particular aspect of the DCP.²²

18 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No. 3, paragraph 2

19 *ib id*, paragraph 3

20 *ib id*, paragraph 4

21 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 2

22 *ib id*, page 14

Proposed Future Expansions

3.20 At the hearing, the Committee asked the NCA to expand on the DCP's requirement that the maximum area of the site to be covered by building is not to exceed 50 per cent of the total site area.²³ The NCA explained that it used a plot ratio of one to one to determine the appropriate site cover,

“which means that if the site is about 13, 000 square metres you can build up to 13, 000 square metres in floor space terms. If you take a site coverage of, say 50 per cent, which means your float plate would have to be, say, 6, 500 square metres – half of it- and you have two storeys of it, then you can easily have your 13, 000.”²⁴

3.21 The NCA noted that if the library's proposed development maintains 50 per cent site coverage, it will have a potential Gross Floor Area measuring 9, 000 to 9, 500 square metres which

“...is a reasonable amount, and ...should meet the Library's requirement.”²⁵

3.22 The NCA emphasised that it employs the plot ratio as a guideline. The DCP is 10 years old and site coverage is not a specific requirement in the ACT Planning and Land Authority's Territory Plan. In view of these factors, the NCA is willing to negotiate with ACTPLA about what would constitute reasonable site coverage.²⁶

Gable End of the Building

3.23 At the hearing, the Committee sought clarification from the NCA in respect to the DCP's roof pitch requirement that the gable end of the proposed building face the street. The Committee observed that the development is bounded by not one, but three streets and wanted to know which street the gable end of the building will face.²⁷

3.24 The NCA explained that in this instance “the street” refers to the Monaro Highway. The Committee commented that this was not specified in the evidence provided to it. The NCA noted the need to clarify that point for the record.²⁸

23 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No. 3, paragraph 4

24 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 14

25 *ib id*

26 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 14

27 *ib id*, page 16

28 *ib id*

Fire Protection and Security

- 3.25 At the hearing, the Committee wished to learn what measures the library will take in relation to fire protection and security.²⁹
- 3.26 With regard to fire protection, the NLA assured the Committee that the new storage facility will be built to the Building Code of Australia's standards.³⁰
- 3.27 At an earlier confidential briefing, the NLA mentioned that a sprinkler system will be installed in the new building. In response, the Committee expressed concern about the potential for water damage to storage items.³¹
- 3.28 At the hearing, the library reiterated that water fire-suppression systems were favoured because
- “...we are fairly familiar with dealing with the problems of wet paper. Generally speaking, the kinds of material that would be stored would be damaged by sprinklers, but it would be damage that we could deal with...The alternatives introduce another range of problems. Most of them work better in a smaller environment – a smaller, closed vault-where there are no staff working.”³²
- 3.29 On the issue of security, the library reported that the new building will have security arrangements similar to those already in place at other repositories at Hume, and will include high fences and security alarm systems.³³

Environmental Sustainability

- 3.30 In its main submission, the NLA stated its commitment to incorporate energy efficiency measures into the proposed facility. Conservation measures will include energy efficient plant, equipment, air-conditioning and lighting systems, water recycling and the use of insulation materials.³⁴
- 3.31 In view of these matters, the Committee asked the library if it had consulted with the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO) to ensure
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29 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 9

30 ib id

31 ib id

32 ib id, page 10

33 ib id, page 9

34 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 70

that the highest possible standards of environmental sustainability are achieved in the new building. The NLA confirmed that it intends to consult with the AGO.³⁵

Consultation

- 3.32 In addition to the AGO, the NLA listed seven other Commonwealth and ACT Government agencies with which the library has held, or plans to hold consultation sessions.³⁶ At the hearing, the Committee wanted to know which of these agencies had already been consulted and whether any significant issues were identified in the course of discussions.³⁷
- 3.33 The library said that it had liaised with the home department for the portfolio, the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, on all the arrangements; the ACT Land Development Agency, in regard to site availability and service requirements; Environment ACT, on issues such as tree locations; the National Capital Authority, in relation to the area's development control plan; and the Commonwealth Department of Finance and Administration, in respect to funding.³⁸

Local Employment

- 3.34 It is anticipated that the proposed work will
“...generate a limited amount of short-term employment mostly in the sub-contractor and skilled trade work areas.”³⁹
- 3.35 In light of recent indications that the local ACT construction industry is currently operating at or near capacity, the Committee wished to know whether there might be any difficulties in sourcing contractors. The NLA responded that no problems had been identified at this stage.⁴⁰

35 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 10

36 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 56

37 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 10

38 *ib id*

39 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 76

40 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 11

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the proposed development of a new collection storage facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT, proceed at the estimated cost of \$9.9 million.

Hon Judi Moylan MP

Chair

8 December 2004